

REMARKS

Claims 36, 37, 39-53, and 55-66 are all the claims pending in the present application. In summary, the Examiner adds a new primary reference Ort et al. (US Patent No. 5,659,626) to support the rejections of the pending claims. Specifically, independent claims 36 and 52 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by Ort. Claims 37, 39-51, 53, and 55-66 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Ort in view previously applied reference Murakawa (US Patent No. 6,381,365).

§102(b) Rejections (Ort) - Claims 36 and 52

With respect to claims 36 and 52, Applicants submit that Ort does not disclose or suggest at least, “wherein the regularity of the image is expressed as one of values, ‘irregular,’ ‘slightly irregular,’ ‘regular’ and ‘highly regular’.” With respect to this particular feature, the Examiner cites the Abstract of Ort, in which it stated that, 1) direction in spacing of ridges at regularly spaced pixels is determined, and 2) ridge angles in frequency at regularly spaced pixel are determined. However, according to Applicants’ understanding, nowhere does Ort disclose that a regularity indicator expresses that the regularity of an image is one of the claimed values set forth in claims 36 and 52.

Further, Applicants submit that indicating a regularity of an image is NOT satisfied by determining direction and spacing of ridges at regularly spaced pixel or by determining ridge angles and frequency at regularly spaced pixels. Therefore, at least based on the foregoing, Applicants submit that independent claims 36 and 52 are not anticipated by Ort.

§103(a) Rejections (Ort/Murakawa) - Claims 37, 39-51, 53, and 55-66

With respect to claims 37, 39-51, 53, and 55-66, Applicants submit that these claims are patentable at least by virtue of their respective dependency from independent claims 36 and 52.

Murakawa does not make up for the deficiencies of Ort.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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